

2016/17 Youth Commissioners Bio's

City District 1 Youth Commissioner



Hi everyone! My name is Marilyn Zhang, and I am a senior at Lynbrook High School. I am incredibly honored to serve as District 1's Youth Commissioner for the 2016/17 fiscal year. Among other issues, I am deeply concerned about the education gap in youth across my district and beyond; I came face to face with this issue after volunteering numerous hours at my district's community center. My goal for this year is to organize a community-wide walk-a-thon to raise money for school supplies for the purpose of helping to reduce this gap.

Beyond policies and the Youth Commission, I enjoy spending time outdoors with my forever-energetic younger brother, playing music at elderly care centers, and delving into neuroscience and cancer research. I look forward to meeting you all -- please don't hesitate to contact me with questions!

City District 2 Youth Commissioner



Hello! I am Katherine Ho, a junior at Valley Christian High School. I am very excited to serve as the San José Youth Commissioner for District 2! I love serving the community and helping others whenever I can, whether that be 3D printing prosthetic arms for children in need or teaching others. My goal is to listen to the concerns and ideas of others and find solutions to the many problems people face. I am most passionate about protecting the environment, empowering youth, and improving education. I look forward to working with my fellow youth commissioners to make San José a better place for everyone.

Outside of the Youth Commission, I find great enjoyment in conveying my ideas through speaking and writing, 3D printing, playing tennis, traveling, meeting new people, and drinking lemonade next to Yosemite Falls!

City District 3

Currently Vacant

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City District 4 Youth Commissioner



Hi all! My name is Lydia Ma, an upcoming junior from Independence High School in San Jose. Some of my characterizing facets include an unhealthy obsession with milk tea, a love for urban exploring, and "night-owl" sleeping tendencies. I am currently interested in the fields of political science and economics because I think that a basic knowledge of these fields are fundamental skills applicable to many future career fields. That aside, I have a volleyball and gymnastics background but am currently a runner; I do cross country and track. My family, friends, and church have played a central role in shaping my values and who I am. A fun fact is that my family calls ourselves, "The MAfia" to exemplify our instilled values of ambition, connection, and love. My favorite past times include binge-watching Netflix, going out with friends and family, and, unsurprisingly, trying new milk tea places.

I applied for Youth Commissioner because I believe that it was formed to take action for, to integrate, and to represent the youth in our community. Knowing that today's youth are the leaders, the voices, and the problem-solvers of tomorrow, I believe the Youth Commission can galvanize and provide outlets for students to take initiative- providing the resources and support that would allow the youth to deviate from complacency in efforts to address problems we've previously thought out of our reach. I hope to see the Youth Commission influence this taking-of-action through our projects, outreaches, and pitches, as well as make this organization more well-known. I hope that we can extend an impact beyond district boundaries and act to galvanize more youth in communal involvement.

City District 5 Youth Commissioner



Hello! My name is elizabeth Plancarte and I am a sophomore at Alpha: Cindy Avitia High School and I am honored to serve as your District 5 Youth Commissioner, growing up in San Jose has inspired me to motivate others and encourage them to participate in community service and other activities that benefit them and oterhs as well. My objectives as your youth commissioner is assist you in any way I can through the Disterict Youth Advisory Council (Y.A.C.) –aside from being your youth commissioner I am an active soccer player and also participate actively in a youth ministry, I am also the founding vice-president of my school and help organize events activities for my school. In my spare time I love to read, and hang out with my family and friends. My most recent activity if being a co-founder of a local youth led nonprofit., I am looking forward to working with my fellow commission colleagues to help build a better future forSan Jose's youth. If you are intereseted in joining the Districtg 5 Youth Advisory council or have any questions please feel free to contact me.

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City District 6 Youth Commissioner



Hi everyone! My name is Rena Zhong, and I am a rising senior at BASIS Independent Silicon Valley. Having interned for the Youth Commissioners the previous summer, I have realized that the youth of San Jose face many problems like poverty and education. Education should be a top priority because education is what will help to determine the future for the youth of San Jose. I want to help them deal with these problems by getting more youth to partake in Youth Advisory Council. I look forward to working with the youth of district 6 to better the community of San Jose.

Outside of school, I am the head of business of operations for my robotics team. We reached out to a nonprofit to create a video that aimed to widen the availability of STEM and robotics-related classes at schools across San Jose. With STEM rising so quickly, I wanted to help bring more STEM courses and opportunities to San Jose youth. Besides robotics, I also do Chinese dance; although dance and robotics are quite different, both help me express my interests and myself. Through

robotics and dance, I have learned to balance my time and to put all my effort into my activities, and I will be doing the same with Youth Commission. I look forward to working as a youth commissioner to help make San Jose a better place!

City District 7

Currently Vacant

City District 8 Youth Commissioner



Hi! My name is Anooshree Sengupta, and I'm a junior at the Harker School. I have lived in San Jose's District 8 all my life, and I am honored and excited to serve as Youth Commissioner! As a member of the District 8 YAC in 2015-16, I led initiatives on outreach and education. The experience motivated me to engage, serve and represent the youth community. I am passionate about equal access to higher education for all, especially education in STEM, to prepare young people for high-tech careers in the Bay Area. I have invested a lot of time and energy in creating and volunteering in programs to get middle schoolers excited about STEM. The Stanford She++ program recognized me as a 2016 #include Fellow for one such program.

I am also an active student citizen and leader at my school. As the Director of PR of the Harker TEDx program, I organize an annual youth conference featuring TED-style talks by thought leaders in areas as diverse as social equality, genetics, astronomy and politics. As Vice President of the Women in STEM club, I help put together the Harker Research Symposium, a research and technology conference attended by hundreds of families each year. I

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am in the fifth year of participating in Robotics programs, where I have competed at the national and international levels.

I look forward to working with my fellow Youth Commissioners, the City Council, and most importantly, with you -- my peers in District 8 -- to represent your needs and concerns, and to make a difference in your lives.

City District 9 Youth Commissioner



Hello! My name is Jason Kim, and I will be a senior at Branham High School for the 2016-2017 school year. I am actively engaged with my school, whether it may be through Leadership, sports, or clubs. I was the Freshmen Class Representative and the Sophomore Class President, and the Junior Class President last year. I have played soccer and volleyball for three years on my school team, and I am an active participant of various clubs, while also holding a position in JSA (Junior Statesmen of America).

Aside from that, I am extremely excited to serve as District 9's Youth Commissioner! I want to make sure that the youths' voices are heard in the community so that youth can have a more pivotal role in shaping our community. I hope to engage more youth and to provide our community with greater opportunities and experiences that allow youth to be involved. I am more than eager to begin working and see how far our community develops!

City District 10 Youth Commissioner



Hi! My name is Samuel Hirst and I am a sophomore at Leland High School. I have the amazing privilege and responsibility to be your District 10 Youth Commissioner this year. I have lived in San Jose since 2009, and am proud to call this wonderful city my home. I am active in my school's speech and debate and track and field teams. I also volunteer at middle school sporting events, and play piano on my church's worship team. In my free time I like to draw, paint, and compose music.

I joined the Youth Commission because I feel that a majority of San Jose's youth is disconnected from city issues. I'd like to help bridge the gap and create more access for youth to have a voice. I am particularly concerned about the high cost of living in our city and its impact on youth. For many students, access to fine arts venues can be very expensive. Exposure to these arts is critical to one's education. Additionally, I am interested in parks and recreation. I believe that historically and ecologically significant parks are important to preserve and protect, so that they will continue to enhance our beautiful city. Overall, I am both excited and honored to represent District 10 youth in moving San Jose forward!

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Citywide Youth Commissioner



Hello! My name is Erica Lin, and I am both honored and excited to serve for another year as the Citywide Youth Commissioner of San Jose. I am a senior at Evergreen Valley High School who is heavily involved as a junior golf coach with The First Tee of Silicon Valley, and as a junior camp counselor at Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Much of my time also goes to competing with EVHS Quiz Bowl, as well as working on service projects as the president of my school's National Honor Society chapter. I've also gotten the honor of working with Stanford University in cancer research, and in my spare time I love to play the piano, write poetry, and play golf.

I have always been passionate about giving back to the community who has helped raise me to be the person I am today, and meeting many different people of diverse histories along the way has been an amazing experience. It is my goal to represent the youth of San Jose and give them the opportunity to make their voices heard. Throughout my term as a Commissioner, I will continue to strive toward promoting youth empowerment, raising awareness for growing environmental concerns, and advocating for equal educational opportunities for the youth in all communities across San Jose. I look forward to another great year!